tariff liberalization programme. The volume of trade, between the two countries is, therefore, expected to grow further, but cannot be quantified at this stage.

Modern Tobacco Barns

750. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE
AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any plans to help tobacco farmers build tobacco barns to reduce fuel consumption;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that very little financial help is being given to farmers presently for this matter;

(c) what steps will be taken by Government to divert some of the huge revenues collected on Virginia tobacco products to help the Virginia tobacco farmers; and

(d) the steps proposed by Government to encourage farmers develop and build modern facilities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (d) As a part of fuel conservation measures, the Tobacco Board is implementing the following schemes for modernization of barns:

i. Subsidizing barn installation; and

ii. Subsidizing replacing the traditional furnaces with venture furnaces.

Under the schemes the Tobacco Board provides, a subsidy of Rs 2000/- for fixing venture furnaces and Rs.1000/- for insulation of barns. A subsidy of Rs.1800/- for barn insulation and Rs 1000/- for fixing barn is also extended by M/s ITC Ltd.

Role of Tobacco Board

751. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE
AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Tobacco Board is restricting the quantity of tobacco grown in various States;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for the Tobacco Board not helping tobacco farmers;

(c) to what extent is the Tobacco Board helping farmers in growing Virginia tobacco this year;

(d) what steps will Government take to ensure that Virginia tobacco is encouraged in various states to help farmers; and

(e) what are the reasons for/lack of funding by Tobacco Board for improving this crop?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) As per the provisions of the Tobacco Board Act, the Board plans and regulates crop size of FCV tobacco every year, keeping in view the demand to ensure remunerative prices to the farmers. Production regulation is essential to balance the supply-demand matrix to ensure a fair and remunerative price to farmers.

(c) and (d) The Tobacco Board facilitates supplies of major inputs like seeds, coal and fertilizers to tobacco growers, implements various extension and developmental schemes on subsidy basis, and disseminates the latest technology on crop production.

(e) Year after year the production of FCV tobacco is far in excess of the crop size fixed by the Tobacco Board and there is no lack of funding of various schemes being run by the Tobacco Board for improving the yield & quality of tobacco.

Protectionist Policies of US Government

752. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether of late the U.S. Government while pressing for the opening of World Markets for her exporters is pursuing extremely protectionist policies preventing the access of the domestic market for the foreign countries;

(b) if so, details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to correct the market distortions as a result of the U.S. policy and the extent of the success achieved therein?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (c) Indo-US bilateral trade is registering good levels of growth and India's exports to US rose by 19.28% in 2004-05. This trend is also continuing in the current year.